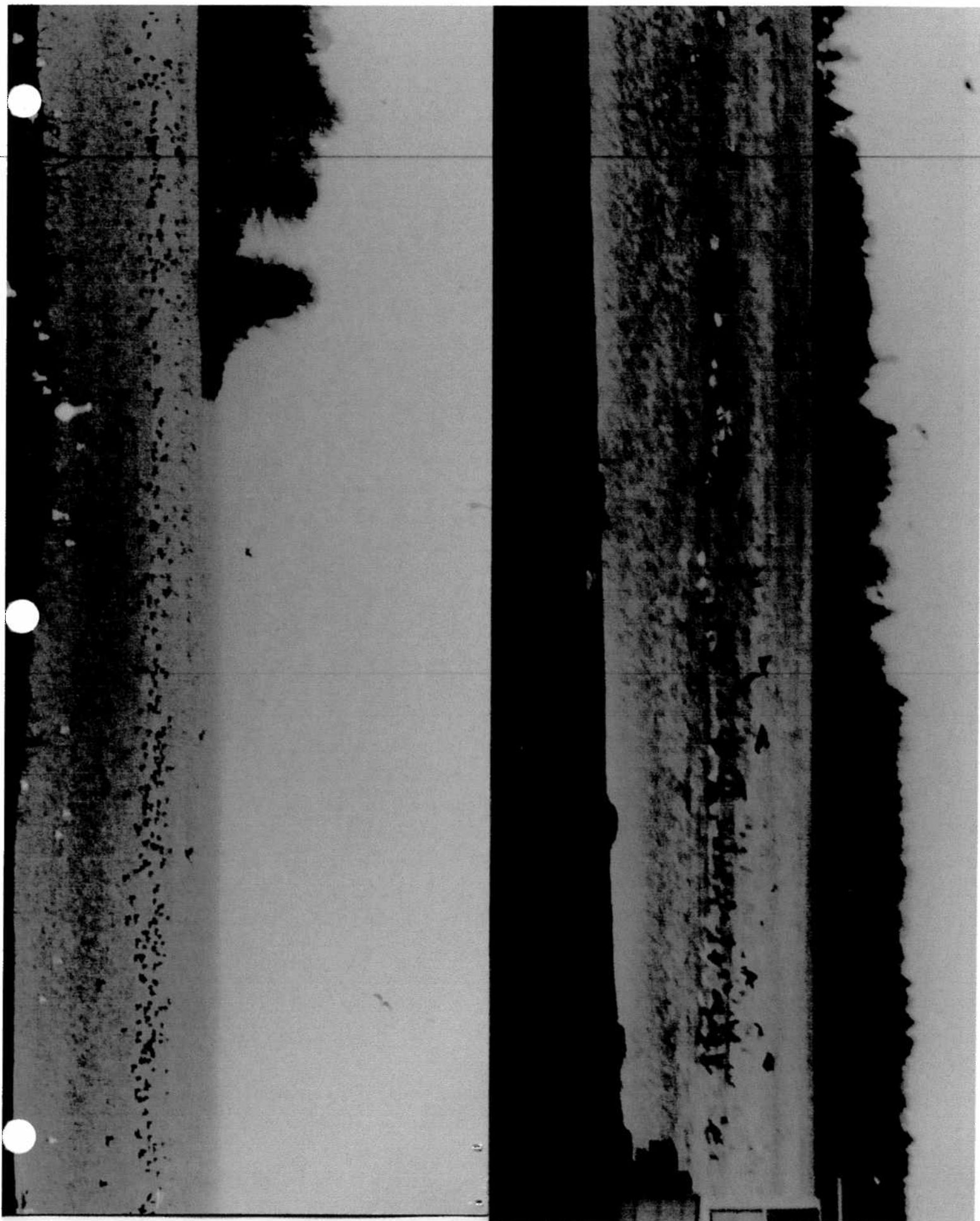


CORMORANT DEVASTATION

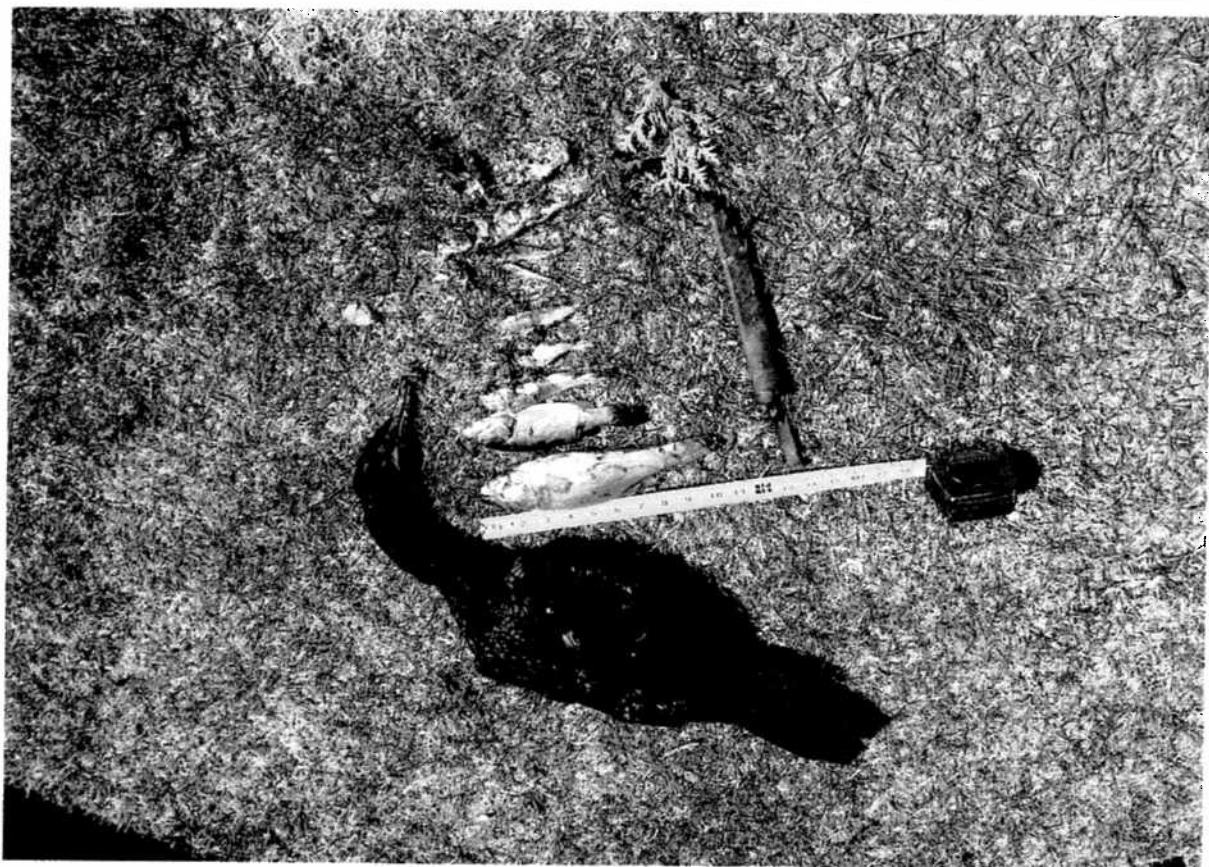
AT

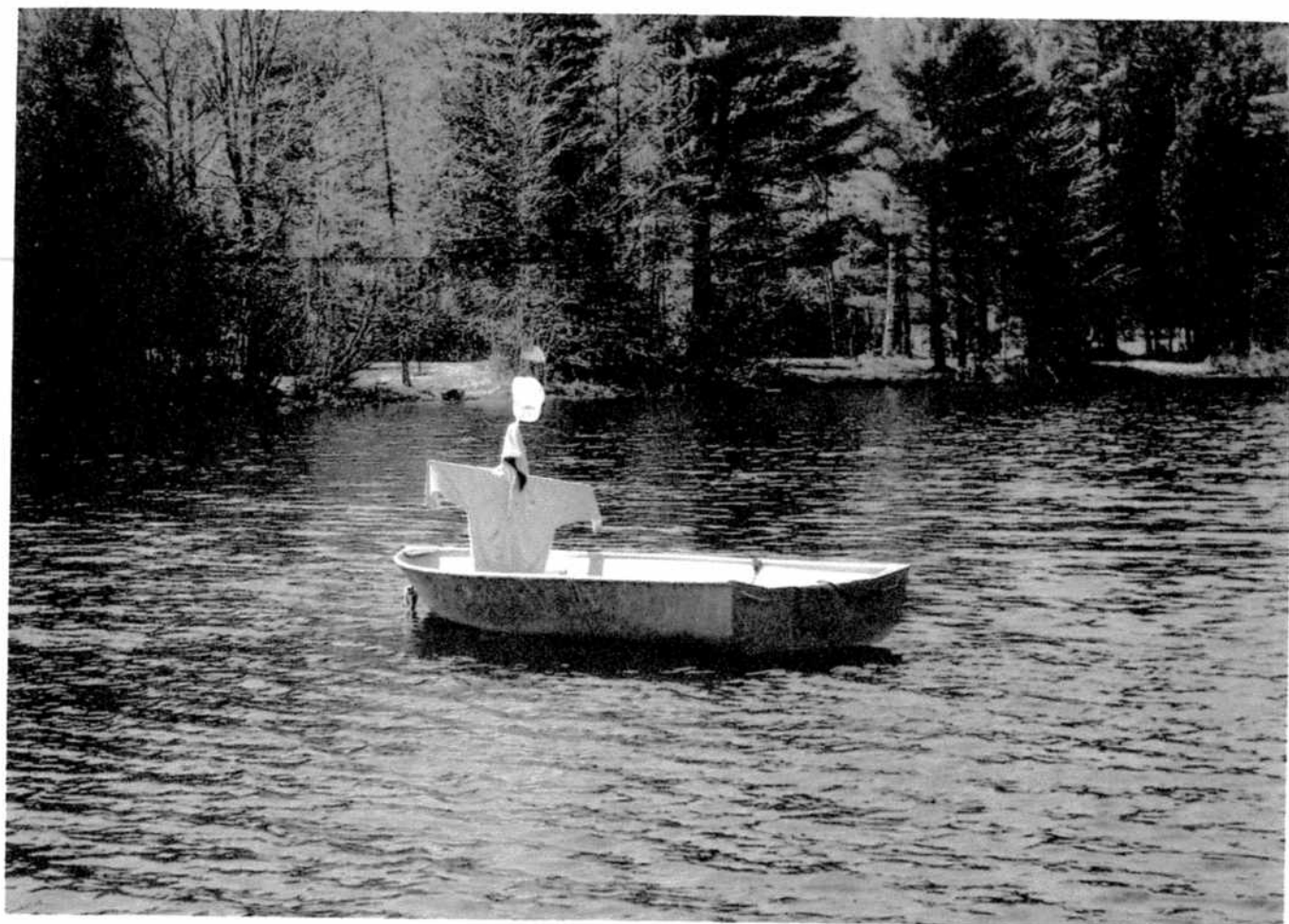
BREVOORT LAKE













Reed-Joseph uses sound & motion to disperse bird & wildlife pests. With 50 years of experience, we are unmatched in service and quality. Our trained technicians are constantly testing new products to assure that our customers have access to the best technology.

Call us toll-free at 800.647.5554 for a free consultation!



1-800-647-5554

Pyrotechnics & Launchers...

Home: Pyrotechnics and Launchers

Pyrotechnics and Launchers Products

→ [Click here to view accessories>>>](#)



15mm Single Shot Launcher (\$29.50 each)

Launches a single 15mm cartridge. Offers rugged dependability and low price.



15mm Double Shot Launcher (\$37 each)

Automatically re-cocks after the first 15mm cartridge is fired, allowing a second cartridge to be quickly fired.

Showing 4 to 6 of 8 works.
[Prev] [1] [2] [3] [Next]

[Click here](#) for a chart detailing the range of our pyrotechnic products.



Congressional Report on Cormorant

It is indeed a pleasure for me to be here to tell you about a program that really worked.

This program is of course Brevoort Lake in 2005. We received the go ahead from the USDA and the program was on.

There were three meetings in March.

A Safety meeting.

How we were going to do the project.

A shooters meeting for the shooters to be USDA agents. "Their was 21 in all"

The first thing that I wanted to do was to have the three associations write letters to their members letting them know that we had the ok to do the cormorant program on our lake, also to let them know what was going to happen during our program. We also wanted them to know that we needed donations to run this program. We put donation cans through out the community, and it was only short time and the money started to come in. In all we raised \$5,612.11

day light, along with new cormorants coming in from off the lake from some where else. We pushed a lot of them off every day with a lot of chasing, shooting Pyrotechnic and using shot guns. There were five people working each end of the lake every day for 33 days. Rain or shine, high winds or not we were there. But they just keep coming on and on. This program continued like this for thirty three days up to May 12th then we had to stop using our shot guns. "After that it was all pyrotechnic" I sold launcher to any of the people that lived around the lake that would help us, and furnished them the bangers to them out of the cormorant control fund. For two more weeks this went on. Then all at once they left. It seamed that they have had enough and the lake was ours again. There were no more than five cormorant on the lake for the rest of the year.

"We won the battle and they were gone".

There was a work sheet that was filled out each day by each person.

There were 1784 total hours of harassment. The total number of shot gun shells used was 1,854, a total pyrotechnics used was 1400, and a total number of cormorants killed 637. The total recovered was 614. The total number of

community at large, and we had a current balance of \$1,634.12 to start the 2006 program

2006

Again our program started out with meetings with the USDA and how we were to go about doing the program again.

Again as soon as the ice went out, two days later the cormorants started coming. There was a different though the birds did not come in to the lake like years pass. They was coming mostly from the South east through the south west. We had to change our program because very few cormorants was coming in on either of the Bays, and if they did it was only a fly by to see if we were their. This meant that we had to work the main part of the lake which was a lot harder. It took a lot of time to figure out how to get them to do what we wanted them to do, which of course was to live the lake and not come back. We had to use the spawning reef to do any good at all.

Decline of the Brevort Lake Walleye Fishery Have Cormorants Played a Role?

Chuck Bassett
Fisheries Program Manager
Hiawatha National Forest
February 21, 2006

Decline of the Brevoort Lake Walleye Fishery

Have Cormorants Played a Role?

Status of the Walleye Population

Brevoort Lake (4,230 acres) is the primary sport fishing destination for anglers seeking warmwater species on the St. Ignace District of the Hiawatha National Forest. It is a moderately productive lake (total alkalinity 60-70 ppm, depth 30 ft) that supports a diverse fish community. Public boat access is provided by the MDNR and Forest Service. Common species include smallmouth bass, northern pike, walleye, yellow perch, rock bass and brown bullheads. Bluegill, black crappie, lake herring, bowfin and, rarely, muskellunge also contribute to the fishery. Fish management records (MDNR) indicate that walleye have been present in the lake since at least the late 1930's but were scarce prior to stocking that began during the late 1970's. A very popular walleye fishery developed by the early 1980's.

Since the late 1980's there has been a significant decline in abundance of walleye in Brevoort Lake (**Figure 1**) despite construction of a 2000-ft spawning reef in 1984-'85. The reef was used heavily by spawning walleyes from the first year it was constructed and has continued to be the primary spawning site for walleye through 2005. Egg baskets placed on the reef during 1985-'90 found excellent egg to fry survival averaging 24.3 % (**Table 1**). Estimated fry production from the reef averaged about 1.6 million annually during these years (**Table 2**).

Population estimates and age analysis in 1989 determined that 49% of the legal size walleye in the lake resulted from natural reproduction that occurred during the first two years the reef was in the lake (**Table 3**). There were no walleye stocked during these years. This level of natural reproduction was believed to be adequate to maintain the existing abundance of walleye, therefore stocking of fingerlings by the MDNR was terminated after 1989. The population of spawning walleye remained above 5000 through 1991 but declined sharply thereafter to only 1200-1700 after 1996. While it is tempting to conclude that this decline resulted primarily from termination of walleye stocking there is evidence that this may not be the case.

CORMORANT DEVASTATION

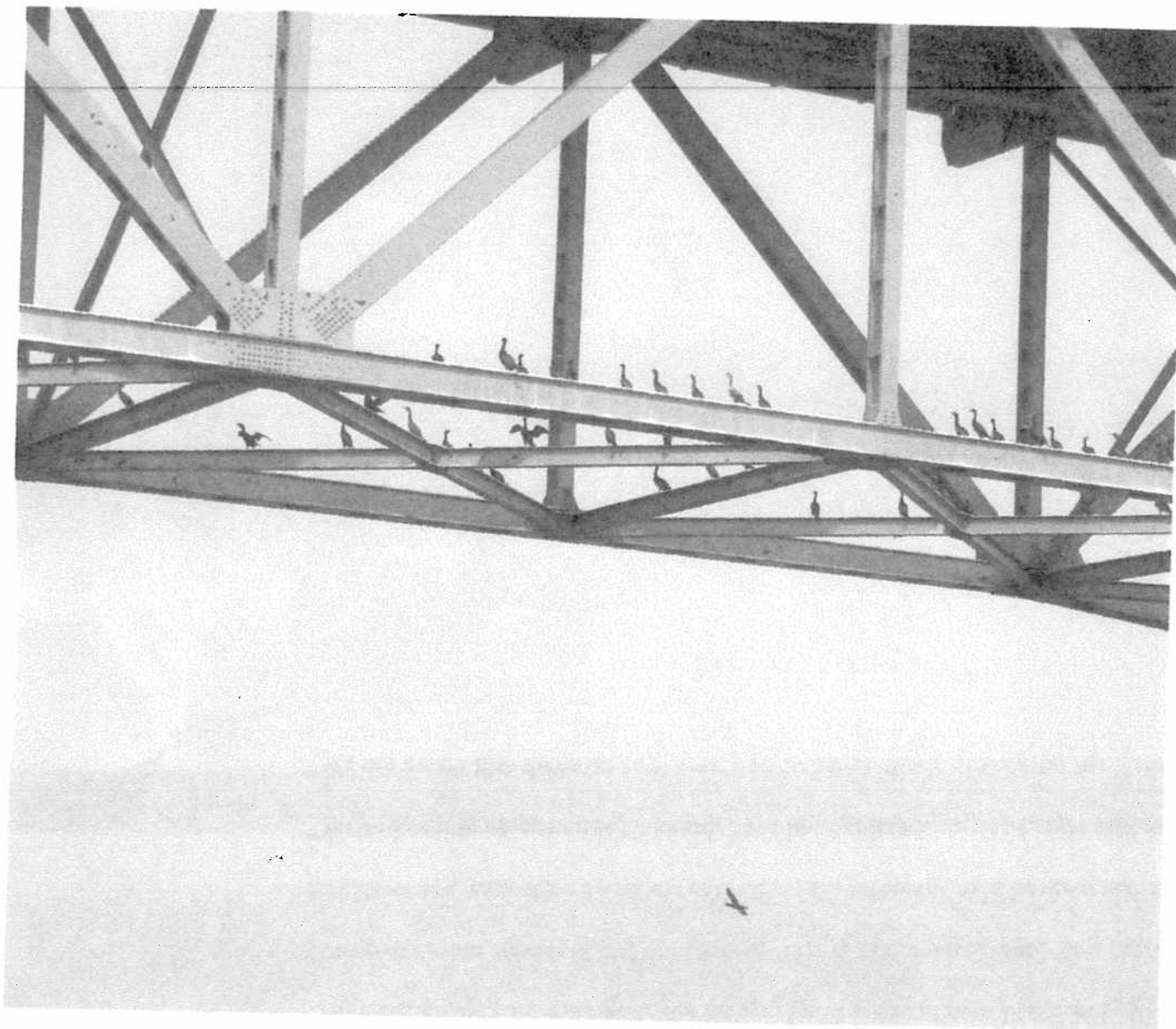
AT

MACKINAC BRIDGE

Coronant droppings harm Mackinac Bridge
Chief Engineer David does his best to control the mess

BY FRED GRAY
NEWS/REVIEW STAFF WRITER

MACINAC CITY — Pigeons and sea gull droppings have been eating away at the paint on the Mackinac Bridge for years and now double-vented coronant pens can be added to the routine maintenance, says the Bridge Authority's chief engineer.



"We don't want them there," said Kim Nowack, who is looking for new ways to chase the birds away. "The coronants are the latest threat to the bridge. The bird droppings corrode the steel, and make maintenance harder by soaking up moisture and putting it against the steel."

She said the annual inspection report said the droppings were a detriment to the existing system but had not risen to the "major problem" category.

Nowack said the authority had put screens on the best beams under the bridge where the pigeons like to roost, mainly toward the Mackinac City end of the bridge. But the coronants, which migrate to Michigan from Mississippi and Arkansas in the spring and return in late fall, are much larger and more voracious birds than pigeons and gulls.

Pete Pordich, state director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services, said that if he is asked he will make a site visit to the bridge and make a recommendation of things the bridge authorities might try to rid themselves of the menace.

"The bridge is symbolic with the state and anything that happens to it is a story," said Pordich, who for the past three years has led the campaign to control the annual spring and summer onslaught of coronants on the fisheries of the Upper Peninsula, particularly in the Chironomus area.

"We have made things about the droppings on light houses and navigational aids on the Great Lakes," Pordich said, adding that any damage to the bridge structure would probably have a separate legal path, different from what's being done on Les Chironomus.

Bill Chiswick, chairman of the bridge authority, said cleaning up after the birds takes time and effort but is not a unique problem.

"They are causing no damage to the bridge, but it requires time, labor and effort to scrape the stuff off," he said. "We're looking for a solution so that we can get the birds off the beams. If we did nothing for years it could cause some problems."

"Our people can service it and maintain it. It hasn't deteriorated down as a major problem that would require going to the House committee," he said. "I'm confident that Kim (Nowack) and the others will find a solution to the problem."

Bob Swenson, executive secretary of the Bridge Authority, said he recognizes that coronants are roosting on the bridge and their droppings are causing corrosion on the beams, similar to that of pigeons and gulls.

"We're keeping an eye on it," he said. "We have safety lines at a height that seems to bother the coronants. We'll look at those areas, and meet with biologists and see if there are any solutions to keeping the birds from roosting on the bridge."

"We are aware that there are low-cost, non-lethal methods of keeping the birds off structures and if we find they are effective we will certainly apply the techniques to the bridge," Swenson said.



"The bridge authority should also look at the weight of these nests as cormorants roost and move try to use the bridge as a rookery," said Larry Meier, a private citizen from Houghton Lake who spearheads the campaign to control the cormorants in the state. Fred Gray can be contacted at 436-9374 or fgray@grayrookerynews.com.

"We don't want them there," said Kim Nowack, who is looking for new ways to shoo the birds away. "The cormorants are the latest. She said the annual inspection report said the droppings were a detriment to the coating system but had not risen to the "major problem." Nowack said the authority had put screens on the box beams under the bridge where the pigeons like to nest, mainly toward the Mackinac Island side.

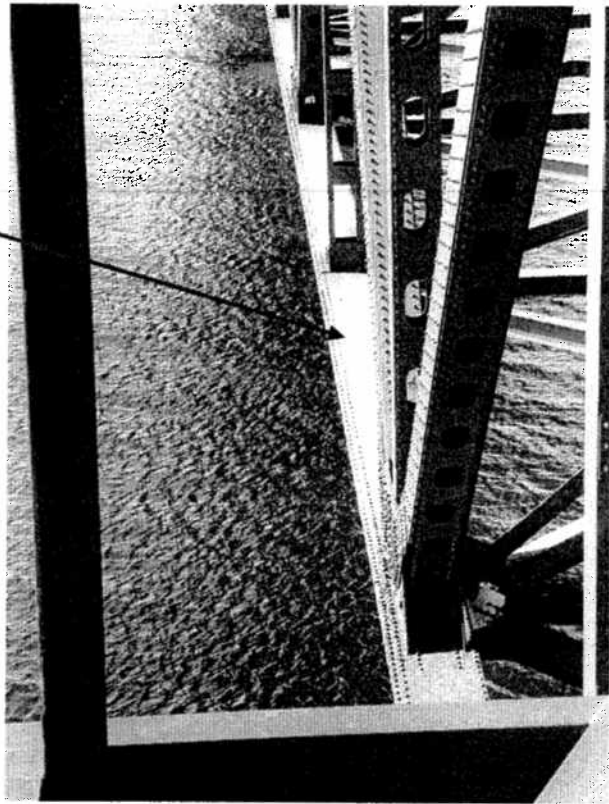
Pete Butchko, state director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services, said that if he is asked he will make a site visit. "The bridge is symbolic with the state and anything that happens to it is a story," said Butchko, who for the past three years has led efforts to control the birds. "We hear similar things about the droppings on light houses and navigational aids in the Great Lakes," Butchko said, adding that an annual cleanup is necessary.

Bill Gnodtke, chairman of the bridge authority, said cleaning up after the birds takes time and effort but is not a major problem. "They are causing no damage to the bridge, but it requires man hours and effort to scrape the stuff off," he said. "We're looking for ways to keep them off."

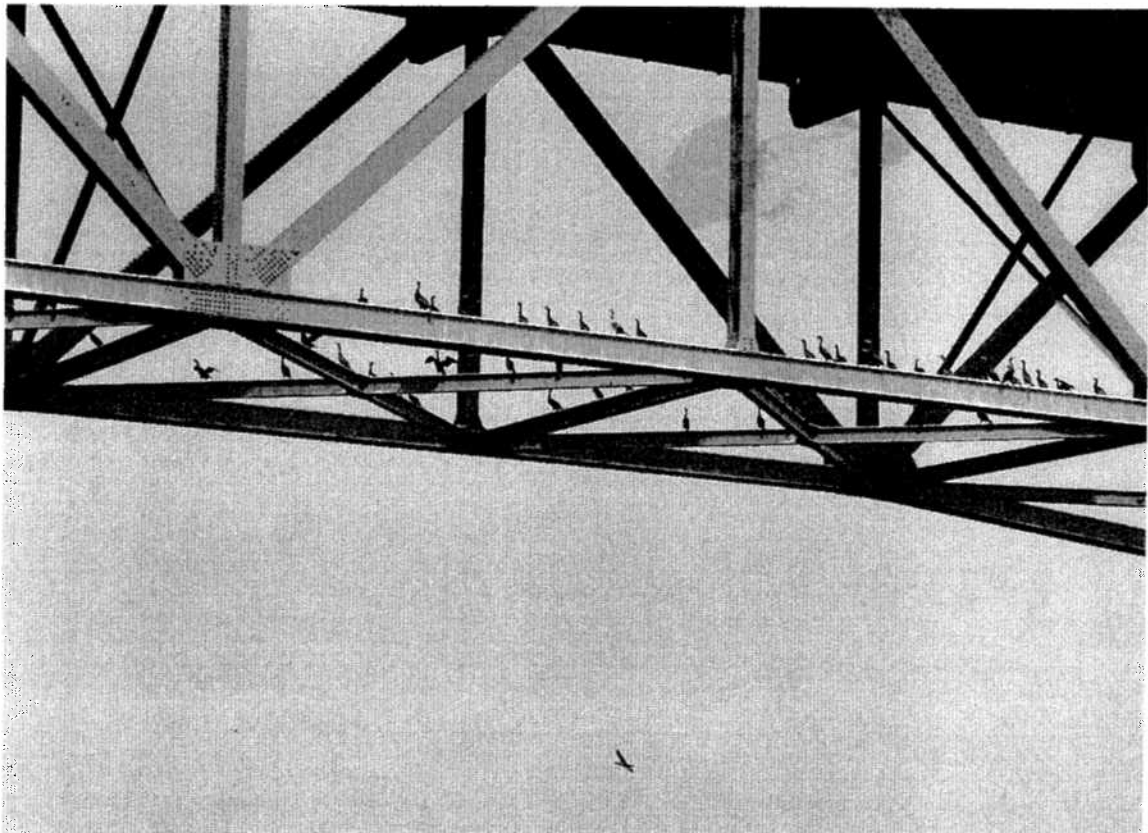
"Our people can service it and maintain it. It hasn't percolated down as a major problem that would require going to the finance committee," said Bob Sweeney, executive secretary of the Bridge Authority, said he recognizes that cormorants are roosting on the bridge and their droppings are a problem. "We're keeping an eye on it," he said. "We have safety lines at a height that seems to bother the cormorants. We'll look at those areas and see if we can keep them off."

"We are aware that there are low-cost, non-lethal methods of keeping the birds off structures and if we find they are effective we will use them."

Bird droppings on the lower chord member of the bridge.



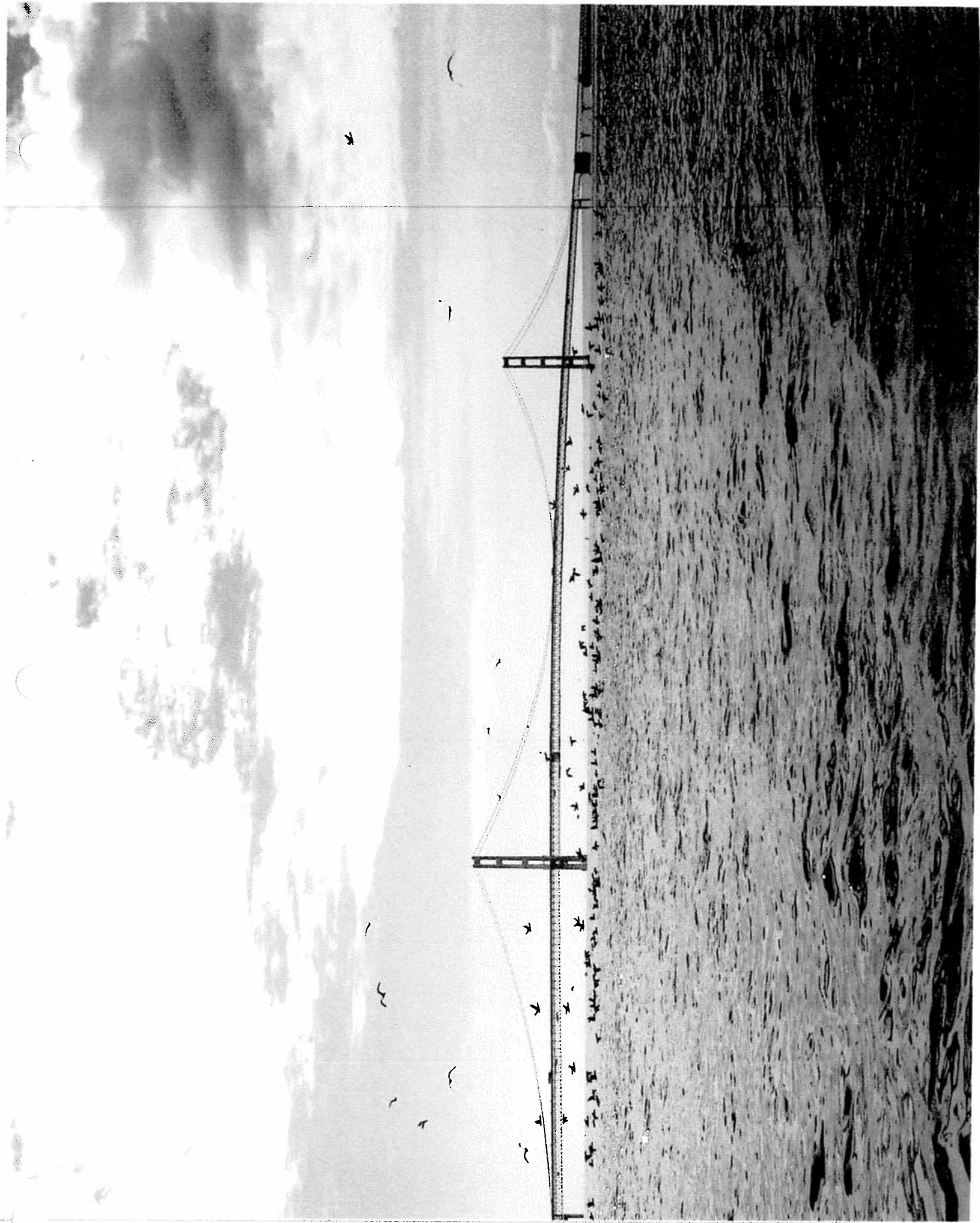
Cormorants perching on the bridge. August 2005



CORMORANT DEVASTATION

AT

GREEN ISLAND





Green Island

2006 Statistics

Ground Nest	320
--------------------	------------

Tree Nest	450
------------------	------------

Total Nesting Pairs	770
----------------------------	------------

Or Total Cormorants	1540
----------------------------	-------------

**Total Cormorants Harvested By Lethal Means
604 equals 39%**

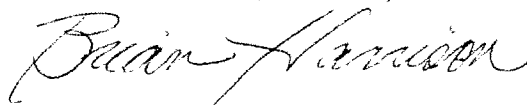
**Leaving 71% of the Cormorants to return to
their home grounds.**

**CORMORANT DEVASTATION
AT**

LES CHENEaux ISLAND

My name is Brian Harrison and I live in the Les Cheneaux area. As a long time resident I have many fond memories of growing up in this area. I am in my fifties now and many of my memories revolve around activities our family enjoyed in the beautiful woods and waters of this area. My father, Gene Harrison, now in his seventies, is a fisherman. To any who know him this would bring a smile to their face for it is such an understatement. Much of my childhood revolved around his great interest and so it was that we spent a lot of time perch fishing in the Les Cheneaux Islands no matter what the season. What an incredible fishery it was. I could tell you hours of fish stories but that is not the point of this letter. My brother came to me in the early 1990's with an idea for a business that I got excited about as well. We opened a full line sporting goods business called The Great Outdoors and I left the business I had shared with my father for many years which was a logging and lumber business. The new business was good as many people were coming to the Les Cheneaux area to enjoy the abundance of fish and wildlife and we rapidly expanded our inventory. About this time we began to notice an increase in the amount of a new visitor to our islands. It was the cormorant. Fishermen began to complain loudly that they were eating the perch in unbelievable numbers. Many meetings were held and representatives of state and federal government would politely listen to our plight but would offer nothing in the way of solution or help. Finally it became obvious even to them that our world class fishery had collapsed but they were still in denial over the cause. Only after several more years of gathering data were they able to come to a conclusion that we knew all along. These birds were the cause and only with a great effort that would be an ongoing one would we be able to impact the cormorant population here in a way that would allow our fishery to recover. In the meantime, however, the impact on our local economy has been devastating. As the many families which traditionally fished our area tired of coming so far to catch nothing they searched for areas more productive and our economy crashed along with our fishery. My business which supported three families fell on extremely hard times and my partner left the business and then finally I had to let my employee go. I struggled for another year of little to no business before closing the doors for good in the spring of 2005. While my financial loss was great the damage to the area was not limited to me. Most of the many resorts and several other businesses have gone the same route as I. It can only be seen now as a dying little community. Many efforts were made to entice other types of tourism to the area but none ever amounted to anything of consequence let alone reach the level of business our fishermen did. Now, much too late for me and my family, there is a concerted effort to control these birds in our area and it seems to be having a measure of success. The fishery seems to be rebounding quickly but too late for me. The only hope for the recovery of the Les Cheneaux area is the continued control of these birds. They have spread now to other areas adjacent to us such as the Brevort Lake fishery which was developed through the tremendous effort of the local sportsmen. If they are not controlled regionally they will suffer the same fate as the Les Cheneaux's. Please do not sit on your hands and allow this program to stop. The Eastern Upper Peninsula is a very economically strapped area and the recovery of our fisheries is of great importance to us economically. Please help us. Thank you for listening.

Sincerely, Brian Harrison
2359 E. Swede Rd, Cedarville, MI 49719

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian Harrison". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name and address.

cormorants be controlled by hunting?

area lakes where they wreaked havoc elsewhere.

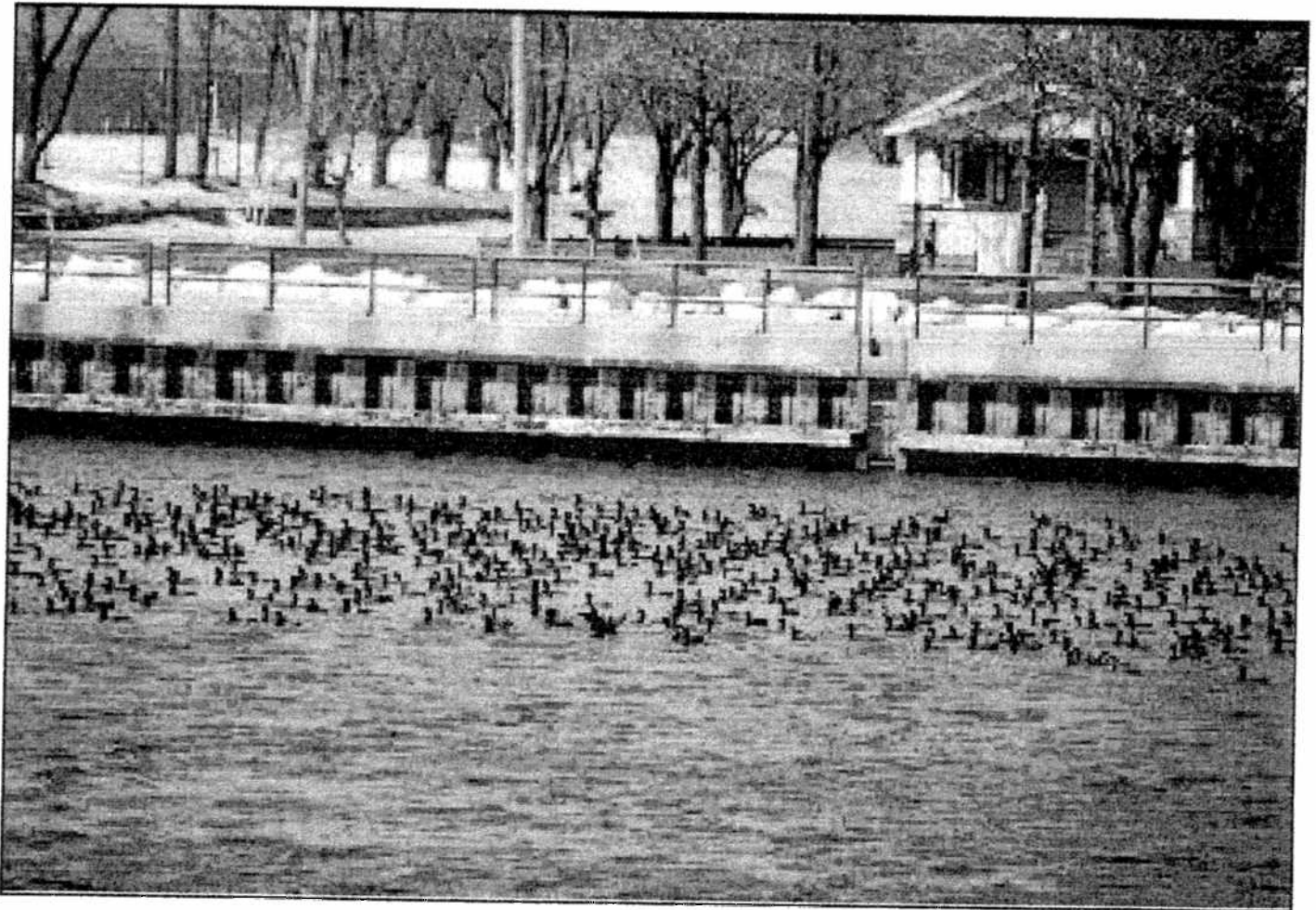
"North, Big and Little Manistique Lakes along with Millecoquins Lake once had great walleye and perch fisheries, but since cormorants moved in, those fish species are now in short supply. Harassing the birds is certainly not the solution, in my opinion, killing them is."

Working for the DNR, Carl Terharr led a study on cormorant depredation of sport fish in the Les Cheneaux Islands. John Duncan assisted Terharr in the study by hunting down cormorants and collecting their stomach contents. The contents

predators. They typically feed in an area until the prey fish are depleted, then they move on to decimate another fishery. They can eat just about any sized fish too. We once found a 20" northern pike in one's gut." Duncan went on to say, "Due to very poor perch fishing these days most anglers have given up on the Les Cheneaux Islands area. There are only a few diehards left trying to eke out a few fish from those cormorant infested waters. The once thriving fishery used to draw in lots of tourism, but not any more. Businesses that depended on fishing have been devastated as a result."

instance, Crow Island once was a beautiful gem, now it's so disgusting that nothing but cormorants exist there. Some people have suggested that raccoons or pigs should be let loose on the rookeries, but those islands are so polluted, that I doubt that even pigs could survive there."

The DNR is planning to oil 15% of the cormorant eggs on the Les Cheneaux Islands this year in an effort to slow down their overpopulation of the area. This effort certainly won't hurt, but most anglers believe that it's too little, too late and besides it will cost the DNR plenty to administer. A liberal hunting sea-



Cormorants have shown up by the thousands along the Great Lakes and have decimated many sport fisheries with their voracious appetites for game fish. Michael Veine photo.

**CORMORANT DEVASTATION
AT**

DRUMMOND ISLAND

April 16, 2007

Northern Properties of Drummond Island, Inc.

29507 E. Channel Road
Drummond Island, MI 49726

To Whom It May Concern:

Please continue to support the seasonal culling of the Cormorant population here on Drummond Island during the spawning season.

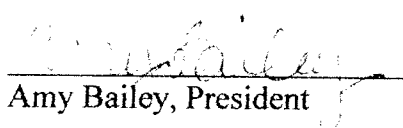
We are a vacation rental home management company that is dependant on tourism, and since the Cormorant program began a few years ago, we have seen a continuous increase in our revenue due to "good fishing," approximately 25% in the past two years. This is a direct result of the increase in our fish population, primarily Walleye and Perch.

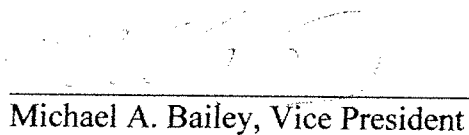
We employ one person and support six part-time persons with our business.

Your consideration in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,


Amy Bailey, President


Michael A. Bailey, Vice President



Drummond Island Yacht Haven, Inc.

P.O. Box 148, 33185 S. Water Street
Drummond Island, Michigan 49726
Phone (906) 493-5232
Fax (906) 493-5229
www.yachthaven.com
yachthaven@northernway.net

April 16, 2007

To whom it may concern:

Re: Cormorant Control

This letter is to express our concern toward the issue of controlling Cormorants. We are in favor of controlling the Cormorant in order to protect sport fishing in the Drummond Island area.

We are in the resort business which relies heavily on fishing tourism to help us remain profitable. We have noticed business increase toward past levels since the controlling programs began. We hope that these programs will continue into the future to help the Drummond Island area fishing return to its past reputation as a sportsman's paradise.

You can count on us to support any programs which will continue to improve the fishing in the Drummond area specially the Potagannissing bay. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or if we may be of any help towards the preservation of the Cormorant control programs.

Sincerely,

G. Dennis Bailey
G. Dennis Bailey



P.O. Box 213
Drummond Island, MI 49726
Phone (906) 493-6650
Fax (906) 493-6612
www.drummondproperty.com

April 19, 2007

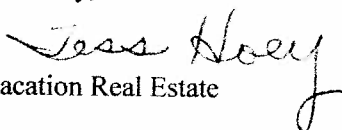
To Whom It May Concern:


Re: Double Crested Cormorant Management

Fishing is a major reason for many people to vacation on Drummond Island and the Cormorant Management Program appears to be working as the perch fishing has continued to improve since its implementation. The spring and fall perch run increases our tourist season and is economically important to the people of Drummond Island. The continuation of this program is vitally important to the continued increase in the numbers of fish in our bays. As a business that depends on tourist I urge you to continue this program.

Thank You,

Sincerely,


Vacation Real Estate



DRUMMOND ISLAND REALTY

DRUMMOND ISLAND, MICHIGAN 49726

Theila Bailey Gagliardi, Broker

Phone: 906-493-5230

Fax: 906-493-5208

Email: drisrealty@northernway.net

Web: drummondisland-realty.com

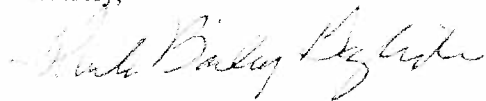
April 19, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

The Drummond Island Sportsman's Club and the Federal Wildlife Service through the Cormorant Harassment Program have made great strides in controlling the cormorant population. In the last two years the perch population has increased. The spring and fall perch runs historically are very important to the length of our tourist season.

Fishing has always been a major reason people come up to Drummond Island and Potagannissing Bay. We need to do everything to protect our fisheries.

Sincerely,



Theila Bailey Gagliardi
Broker/Owner

DRUMMOND ISLAND SPORTSMAN CLUB

April 15, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

In regards to the Cormorant control program that has been implemented by the USFWS, the Drummond Island Sportsman Club would like to extend our support and appreciation.

During the last decade the local population of the Double Crested Cormorants has exploded. With the resulting decimation of the Yellow Perch fishery the economy of the Island and the surrounding communities has been severely impacted.

Due certainly in part to the PRDO enacted by the USFWS we have seen a great improvement in fishing success and in our local and tourist fishermen's satisfaction.

As an organization and personally I have received no complaints regarding the Cormorant control efforts. In fact I have heard many comments related to the positive effects and also to the professional manner in which the PRDO has so far been put into practice.

The continuing work on this endeavor is vital, both economically and culturally we need a healthy fishery in order to sustain a viable community.

Sincerely,



James Bailey II
President
Drummond Island Sportsman Club

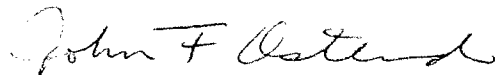
11752 N Elk Lake Road
Williamsburg, MI 49690
April 9, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:
RE: My letter of February 2, 2002

In February, 2002, I wrote to the Environmental Impact Study of the US Fish and Wildlife Service about the lack of perch in the bays of Drummond Island due to immense predation by the Double Crested Cormorant. Five years later I am about as excited as a 69 year old grandfather can get that I am going to be able to take my 8 year old grandsons perch fishing and be able to get enough perch for a good old fashioned Drummond Island perch fry with homemade coleslaw and French fries. It doesn't get any better than this. But we cannot relax.

The big ugly eating machines are still out there. I still believe there should be some effort in the fall to control these birds. The perch are still spawning in the boat wells and around docks instead of in the open bays where the cormorants feast on them. Ospreys, bald eagles and loons all eat fish but they are a joy to watch and do not consume 1 to 5 pounds of fish a day. Hopefully these birds can be controlled and even your grand children can catch a mess of keepers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John F. Ostlund".

John F. Ostlund

Enclosed: Copy of 2002 letter

FORT DRUMMOND MARINE & RESORT

36183
491 WHITNEY BAY
DRUMMOND IS., MI 49726
(906) 493-5471 or 5359

COTTAGES, STORE, BOATS
MOTORS, MECHANIC, DOCKAGE,
BOAT STORAGE

March 14, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

The Federal Wildlife Services Cormorant Harrassment Program that is being used on Drummond Island is definitely working. The cormorants are kept away from the primary spawning areas during the spawning period. The federal program has been in effect for three years and will run for two more years before the funding ends.

I sincerely hope that the State of Michigan can continue this program because it is a very vital part of our tourist industry. I have been involved in the tourist industry for thirty-eight years. We have lost a month of tourism in the spring (May) and a month in the fall (September) due to the decline in the spring and fall perch runs. When you have a tourist fishing season of five months and loose two months, that is a very serious loss of revenue.

The decline in fishing was directly related to the massive population explosion of the cormorants. Fishing started declining as the cormorants increased to the point that catching a single perch was a rare experience.

Since the Federal program has been in effect the numbers of perch caught have been steadily increasing and we are just starting to see some decent catches in the spring and fall.

Sincerely,



Blaine A. Tischer
Fort Drummond Marine & Resort

more sales tax. All the restaurants, bars, Resorts, motels and all other businesses will have a great turn around. If the fishing keeps coming back as it has the last few years.

I personally would like to thank Pete Butcher for putting his trust in our Club, to be the first private organization to work with Toni and Greg who are with the Agricultural Dep to harass and control the Cormorant population.

We must keep this going for years to come every one will benefit. It is very costly and it takes alot of man hours, but the end result will be worth it.

Thank you!

Steve Kemppainen

Lake View Resort

CORMORANT DEVASTATION

AT

Naubinway

And

Epoufette

April 16-07

To whom it may concern

My name is Steve Kempainen and my wife's name is Karen, we have owned and operated Lake View Resort on Drummond Island, Mi. for the past 37 years.

Drummond had some of the best fishing in the State in the 70s & 80s. Then in the mid 80 the Cormorant started nesting in this area & Les Cheneaux Islands.

By the mid 90s there were thousands of birds coming in to our Bay as soon as the ice went out, usually April 22 - 26. Then they would be here every day through May into June. All the fishing started dropping off and everyone started complaining. Then all the fishermen quit coming. This devastated our spring and fall business.

We have 8 Cottages that used to be full for 5 weeks in the spring and again in the fall. We lost all of this business because



HIAWATHA SPORTSMAN'S CLUB

RR #1, BOX 9A, ENGADINE, MICHIGAN 49827
Tele: 906-477-6592 Fax: 906-477-6008

January 9, 2002

Division of Migratory Bird Management
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 N. Fairfax Dr., Room 634
Arlington, VA 22203

Re: Proposed Cormorant Management

Dear Sir or Madam:

I recently attended your public meeting in Mackinaw City and felt compelled to address this issue further. I was pleased that the (proposed action) was identified so that my comments could be better directed. I believe the Environmental Impact Statement was well written but I do not understand how anyone reading it could come to the conclusion that **Alternative D: Public Resource Depredation Order** is any thing more than a short term fix. Any species that is protected from predation and has suitable habitat will over populate and any recommendation from the Fish and Wildlife Service should include a sustainable long term management plan.

I am the manager of the Hiawatha Sportsman's Club in Engadine Michigan. Our 35,000 acre club with 1,200 members is located on the northern most shores of Lake Michigan in the Upper Peninsula. We also border on a 1,000 acre inland lake called Millecoquins Lake and most of the Millecoquins River and its' tributaries. For the last 75 years this system of streams, rivers and lakes have provided our membership with some wonderful fishing opportunities. Starting back in 1957 the Hiawatha Sportsman's Club built three earthen dams on these streams and subsequently planted them with trout. This practice continues today. Several years ago we started to see the cormorants coming in from Lake Michigan. Shortly after that we notice a sharp decline in trout being caught from our ponds. Next the cormorants found Millecoquins Lake and the once abundant perch and bluegill populations became nearly impossible to find.

*Hiawatha Land! Thirty-five thousand acres of forests, spring-fed lakes, streams and winding trails.
This is the great North, land of the bear, whitetails and wild brooks. This is sportsman's country!*

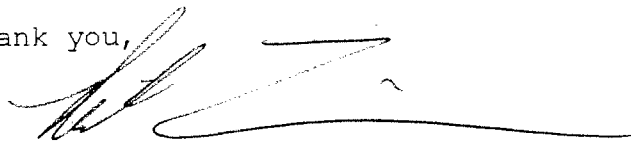
contradicts ethic of hunting for use and might not be widely accepted." Have you ever heard of anyone excited about sitting down for a nice plateful of coot, merganser, crow, woodchuck or skunk. Half of the ducks hunted during any given year are nearly inedible. The only true negative is the emotional aspect. The Audubon society and other similar group would have to struggle with the reality of hunters harvesting a bird they once help protect.

Once upon a time the cormorant needed help to survive. Today the cormorant is thriving and the Fish and Wildlife Service should take credit for it, call the "save the cormorant" project a wonderful success and start managing cormorants like other migratory birds that have stable populations. When ducks, geese, woodcock, deer, bear, turkeys, elk, rabbits, skunks, raccoons, crows or any other species become over populated we raise bag limits. Why should the cormorants be any different? Is the fear that hunters might eradicate the species? I do not believe the cormorant is in any more danger of being hunted into extinction then skunks, crows or porcupines. The cormorant is a very smart and fast bird and even with a hunting season it will probably be necessary to issue depredation permits and use localized control.

To summarize my thoughts, the action needed to bring cormorants into harmony with the rest of the environment is:

1. Implement Regional Population Reduction
2. Localize management to the state level similar to ducks and geese
3. Open a liberal spring hunting season
4. Increase depredation permits to areas with acute problems

Thank you,



Lester Livermore, Manager

Cc: Bart Stupak, United States Congressmen
Scott Shackleton, State Representative
Walter North, State Senator



**CORMORANT DEVASTATION
AT**

BEAVER ISLAND

OUTDOORS

Cormorant takeover

Beaver Island swamped with fish-feasting birds

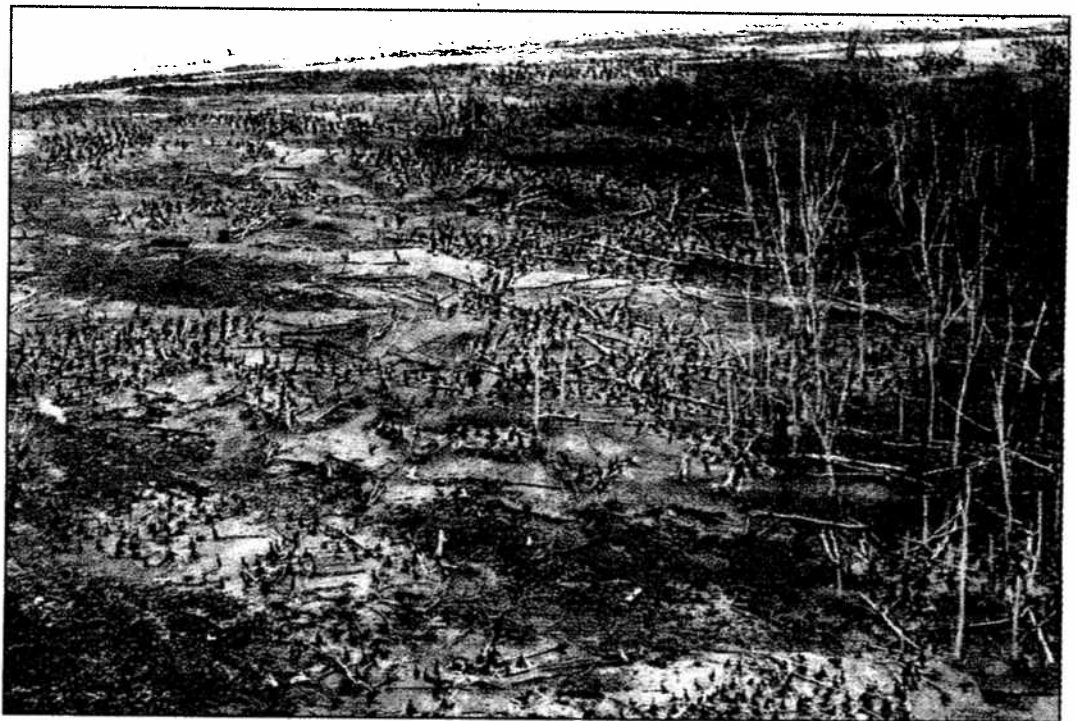
BEAVER ISLAND, Mich. (AP) — Thousands of cormorants have returned to the Beaver Island archipelago in northern Lake Michigan, but the migratory birds aren't getting a very warm reception from the island chain's human inhabitants.

Cormorants visit Beaver Island annually to feast on fish and crayfish. Each of the large, black, diving and swimming birds consumes between 1 and 1 ½ pounds of food daily.

The first few arrived in April. By midsummer, the islands will host an estimated 60,000 cormorants, including newly hatched offspring, the Petoskey News-Review recently reported. Most will stay through mid-November.

Jeff Powers, president of the Beaver Island Wildlife Club, said the islands have the largest concentration of cormorants in the Great Lakes.

About 550 people inhabit the islands year-round, while that figure climbs to 2,500 or more during the summer. Many locals blame the is-



Here is one of the northern Beaver Islands where trees have been denuded by droppings of double-crested cormorants. Hundreds of the migrant birds can be seen as small dots on the surface of the island. (AP photo)

land chain's dearth of small mouth bass on the rise of the cormorants, but some biologists say there is no direct connection.

The birds' acidic droppings denude trees and bushes and create an environment that state Rep. Kevin

Elsenheimer, R-Bellaire, recently described as resembling a "virtual war zone."

The House version of the next state budget includes \$150,000 to help federal and tribal agencies control the birds, but the Senate version

does not.

About a dozen members of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians who live on the island and fish off its shores have offered to help control the cormorants.

**CORMORANT DEVASTATION
AT**

MANISTIQUE LAKE'S

ECONOMIC Loss related to Cormorants

4-5-07

In December of 1984 my wife and I purchased a home and resort business on Big Manistique Lake in Mackinaw County. I had fished the lake since 1960 and knew what a good Walleye fishery it was. After the early Walleye pits, off the State fish railroad car, just after the turn of the century, the fishing improved to the point that it supported many resorts and related businesses in the Curtis, Germfask and McMillan areas. In the 1920s and 30s as the roads improved and automobiles were more dependable the area became a busy place from Spring to late Fall and Winter. One of the largest resorts was Gronland's built in 1927 with 24 cabins and operated continually up into the "90's". In 1955 thru the "60's" the Manistique Lakes Association listed 75 resorts on North Manistique, Big Manistique and South Manistique Lakes, a total of about 16,000 acres of water. You may imagine the number of other enterprises that also existed and depended on the tourist, vacation and fishing interest. At one time there were 3 hardware stores, 6 or 7 gas stations, one large and many small grocery stores, meat markets, Gift Shops, 3 hotels, Boat dealers, Minnow and Bait shops, bank, restaurants and many other support businesses. There were changes in resort numbers thru the years, many owners sold off rental units and frontage to former customers. Resorts, as such, went down in numbers but Summer people still came to Curtis for the activities it offered, but the main draw was still the good fishing. Thru all these years many of the same fishermen came every year and the pressure never hurt fishing results. Our own business, as most others, was busy from the 3rd week of April until the middle of October.

Now enter the cormorant into the picture. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Census reports show that cormorants returned to Northern Lake Michigan in 1977 with 9 Pairs recorded. By 1997 the population had grown to 31,079 nesting pairs at 45 + colonies. This does not take into account non breeders and birds passing thru during Migration. In the 2000's the numbers had increased to 115,000 nesting pairs. There are many more in the Northern Lakes in 2006. Of course the problem is not ours alone. In 1999 on the Mississippi Delta cormorants consumed 940 metric tons of Catfish, farm raised, in one winter. Most people know of their capacity and eating habits especially when they are feeding fledglings so it does not bear repeating now. In Michigan they not only take game fish but badly deplete our forage base. I have witnessed flocks of 1500 plus birds killing perch and alewives in the Great Lakes from Big Bay De Noc west to the Ford and Cedar River and to Menominee. The loss of fish is also a loss for business people in this area.

Five years ago we put our property on Big Manistique Lake up for sale. It took 3 years to sell at a price \$46,000 less than appraised value. This was not a real estate agents appraisal but done by a independent company from Munising. We had a young couple that wanted it very much but could not take due to the loss of customers due to the cormorant. Since the Spring of 2004 the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and the Michigan D.N.R. have taken a very active part in oiling eggs with corn oil and limited killing of adult birds. This costs money. Federal funds have exceeded 150,000 a year and it has been hoped that the State of Michigan will at least match these funds. Let us not lose the gains that have been made from the Chipewagon County West thru Brevort Lake, Manistique Lakes, Indian Lake and the Bays De Noc.

Sincerely A. J. H. H. H.

Jimmie Miller

From: <tombronz@hughes.net>
To: <luckytwo@up.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 7:59 AM
Subject: cormorants

History of cormorant harassment efforts on Manistique Lakes.

Began spring of 2000 after meetings with DNR & USF&WS

- Total of 46 volunteers for both lakes(identification card required)
- Daily/weekly reports to DNR required
- Total effort summarized and reported to DNR,community and others as required
- Have not been able to find copy of detailed report on hours, number of birds, gas consumed
- Hundreds(some estimates of 1000's) of birds on lakes thru spring and summer
- Focus on not allowing them to nest

2002 thru 2005 harassment efforts continue on both lakes

Depredation permit from USDA Wildlife Services in 2002 for Norton Island on South Manistique Lake after owner documented loss of trees. Vegetation and trees on Gull Island in Big Manistique Lake are 3/4 gone but unable to determine ownership. It is believed it belongs to the state.

- Depredation permit for South Lake renewed each year
- Big Lake volunteers continue to harass only each spring.
- Most efforts from shortly after ice out to May 15 (harass only after)
- 300 to 500 birds daily on each lake
- Limited shooting on south lake appears to push birds to big lake
- \$200 shells + noise makers donated by Curtis Chamber of Commerce and others
- Each lake has 10-15 volunteers attempting to have some on lake every day
- Estimate 700 + man hours on each lake
- Estimate 900 to 1100 gallons of gasoline used on each lake

2006 both lakes allowed to harass and use limited lethal means to keep birds off lakes.

- 30 volunteers for both lakes with 6 approved to use lethal methods each lake
- Noise makers provided by USDA
- \$500 in shells provided by Curtis Chamber of Commerce, businesses & others

- Saw fewest amounts of birds since harassment efforts started
- Some days with no birds
- Big lake average 25 to 200 birds per sighting
- South lake 50 to 100
- Less than 50 birds killed

Unable to get good estimate on loss of tourist business due to lack of fish in the lakes. The DNR conducted net surveys of all 3 lakes(North Manistique Lake, Big Manistique Lake, South Manistique Lake) and has developed a stocking plan. Recent creel surveys have shown improvements in fishing which should result in tourism improvements. It is critical that these efforts continue and be expanded to other areas. If the cormorant population was controlled the costs for government agencies and private groups could be eliminated.

**CORMORANT DEVASTATION
AT**

BIG BAY DE NOC

And

LITTLE BAY DE NOC



Rob Hamilton | Daily Press

Double crested cormorants, like the one shown above, have greatly increased in population in the last 20 years. The DNR says the elimination of pesticides like DDT, which cleaned up the Great Lakes, may have been one of the contributing factors in the population explosion.

Population boom

Cormorants numbers grow over decades

Rob Hamilton
news@dailypress.net

ESCANABA — Don Shirley frequently enjoyed snorkeling in Little Bay de Noc near his lakefront home in Ford River Township. But when thousands of double crested cormorants began nesting on a rocky shoal about a mile away, his enjoyable activity began

or worries about them becoming too abundant."

Human beings were the biggest cause of cormorant population decline as chemical contamination, especially DDT, a pesticide used by farmers, was prevalent in the Great Lakes and affected the birds' food supply in the 1940s through the 1960s. The fish-eating birds at the top of the food

try in which farmers raised catfish in the southern states, he said.

"Once our waters began to clean up, they increased their population dramatically, Albright said. "Many of them are going to these catfish farms in the winter time, and are causing a lot of damage down there. These birds have this great source of nutrition on both winter grounds and summer

Place an ad for \$1
in the Classified
Help Your Neighbor Section
7 words/numbers for

LEASE TO OWN, Large
4-bedroom home on
1.5-acres in Cornell. Some
remodeling done. Lots
more potential. Call Jeri-
my, 906-280-1012, quick-
realestate@solutions.com

at dining
great
OBC,
1414
0139



The cormorant colony on Cat Island in lower Green Bay grew last year despite the shooting of 436 birds as part of a two-year analysis. The island was home to about 4,000 breeding adults at the end of summer. Sarah Meadows/Special to the Press-Gazette

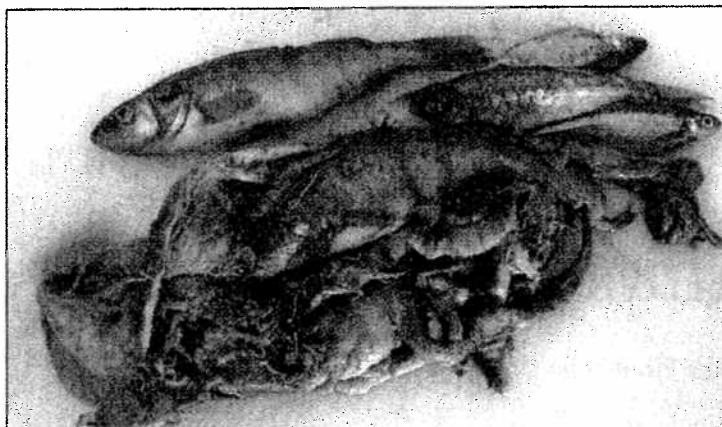
Cormorant study fuels the fire

Anglers press
for reduction;
experts unsure

BY KEVIN NAZE

Press-Gazette correspondent

Are cormorants a victim of perception, or are they a conservation effort gone out of control?



"It's just going to prove we've been saying all along we've got to control birds," Henrich said.

UW researchers will try to determine whether cormorants eat enough perch to prevent robust numbers of young from hatching in 2003 and 2004, reaching a fishable size. The data will be plugged into a model developed from perch data collected on Green Bay over the last 25 years.

Dan Thomas of Elmhurst, president of the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council,

**Ms. Rebecca A. Humphries, Director
Department of Natural Resources
P.O.Box 30028
Lansing, MI 49829**

April 25, 2006

Dear Ms. Humphries,

The double crested cormorant normally returns to our Upper Peninsula waters in the last couple days of March or the first days of April. This is mid April and their arrival is just beginning in their normal numbers. Persons returning from the Southland during the first week of April observed a mass of cormorants as they passed an Illinois lake. Did they pause to take advantage of a plentiful source of fish food? Perhaps remembering the scarcity of food in U.P. waters when they departed the U.P. in late October, 2005. This shortage is attested to if conditions observed on a reef off of No-See-Um Creek, that housed some 6,000 cormorants at the end of the hatching season in 2005, and which scarcity likely prevailed across all U.P. waters. Adult regurgitation to feed their young observed on this reef at the beginning of the hatching was 100% alewife, except for a 16" sucker. Observed near the end of the hatching was 40 % alewife and 60 % round goby, the latter considered a food in desperation. Yellow perch, smelt, suckers etc. were no where to be had; they were eaten by the cormorants several years previous.

A second situation of cormorant devastation is a person living on shore at Big Bay deNoc's Van's Harbor reiterates that prior to the cormorant invasion some 50-75 boats would fish perch each year in their spring run. In the past five years not boat one has appeared.

The USDA Wildlife Service during the summer of 2005 completed their assessment of the cormorant population between Manistique and west to Cedar River, conservatively tallying some 26,000 birds that reportedly each eat one lb. of fish per day. The Wildlife Service is charged with keeping numbers in control and they plan a population reduction this coming summer season 2006. The Wildlife Service looks to the MICHIGAN DNR to advise them of the condition of the fishery. Has the DNR done this? Most people say no!

On October 21, 2005 Rep. Tom Casperson, et al. convened a meeting held here in Escanaba on the subject of cormorants. The only DNR person represented (Raymond Rustem of Lansing office Wildlife Division) gave a report on the history of the cormorant in Michigan. Not one word referred to the condition of the fishery; nor were there any local DNR fishery people present, from whom the local conditions should have been given. Viewing cormorant feeding and the fish they are currently eating is a good starting point. Many believe the local DNR fishery is not fulfilling their obligation and responsibility.

When the Cormorant population is better controlled, should we give thought to raising yellow perch in the existing walleye rearing ponds and stock our bays to aid their return? The aquatic food that the mass of cormorants feed on could well serve the food need of the walleye, salmon and other large game fish, leaving what the latter eat to replenish the fishery. Cormorants are not known to serve any good except to be represented in our environment.

Sincerely,

**Mich. Rep. Tom Casperson
C. Rep. Port Street**



Mr. Robert E. Schmeling
1900 3rd Ave. S
Escanaba, MI 49829

Mr. William E. Moritz, Chief
Wildlife Division
Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 30028
Mansing, MI 48909-7528

Dear Mr. Moritz:

June 22, 2006

This is in reply to your letter to me dated May 16, 2006 with regards to the Double Crested Cormorant and their influence on the fisheries of upper Lake Michigan.

In the third paragraph of your reference letter you state that the local MDNR Fisheries Biologist provided information demonstrating no cormorant impact on the sport fishery in the Bays de Noc location.

This may be true for those walleye, lake trout, northern pike and chinook salmon that inhabit the deeper waters of the Bays de Noc. I seriously question the local biologist when it comes to the shallower waters where the smaller fish (perch, etc.) would habitat, that presently only the round goby and alewife are mainly present. Yellow perch and smelt, including their spring spawning runs have been absent for several years in the shallower waters. Perch and smelt are thought to be the cormorant's first choice of food. We now find what population is left of these two species is in the deeper waters where the cormorant's extra effort to feed don't meet their appetite. For the past 3-4 years the cormorants are known to feed chiefly on inland waters as Lake Michigan waters are void of their needed food, except the alewife and round goby.

The local fish biologists tend to claim that the larger game fish (walleye, etc.) are consuming all the perch and smelt. Indeed, they may be taking a share. But why allow the cormorants to exist in such great numbers and take a significant amount of the perch, smelt and other game fish, that could be added to the fishery of the Bays de Noc.

The USDA Wildlife Service inventoried in their "flyover" between Manistique and Cedar River a conservative 26,000 cormorants at the end of the cormorants stay here in 2005. A simple computation of fish taken by the cormorants equals over 6,000,000 pounds, a very significant amount, computed as follows: Length of cormorant stay in the north = 214 days. Using a number of 15,000 adult birds at the beginning of their stay with an added 11,000 after the hatch:

$15,000 \times 76 \text{ days} \times 1 \text{ pound of fish} = 1,140,000\#$

$15,000 \times 49 \text{ days} \times 4 \text{ pounds of fish} = 2,940,000\#$

$26,000 \times 89 \text{ days} \times 1 \text{ pound of fish} = 2,314,000\#$

Total = 6,394,000 #

This does not include what they destroy and leave at their feeding sites that fishermen have observed, floating on the water surface.

There have been two general meetings held here in Escanaba on the cormorant subject over the past year. Rumors had it that the local head biologist was requested by his superiors not to attend. The group in attendance was hoping to get an insight into the condition of the fishery, which did not happen. At the second meeting your Raymond Rustem gave a paper on the history of the cormorant in Michigan, but no input on the current fishery status. Is there an explanation for the DNR taking this position?

We acknowledge that there are other serious influences on the fishery in the presence of the alewife, round goby, rusty crayfish, ruffe, water fleas and the two mussels, with no feasible remedy. The cormorant can be reached and the need for their reduction is thought to be significant by a multitude of

Take Five

5A

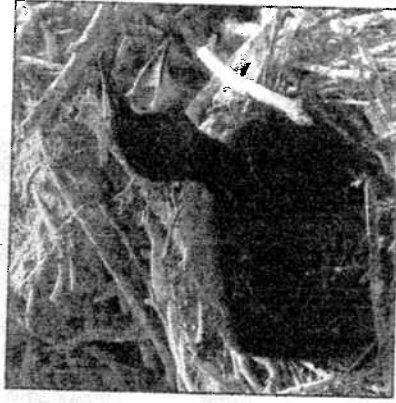
Bill proposed to control cormorants

WASHINGTON — Congressman Bart Stupak (D-Menominee) has re-introduced legislation aimed at better controlling the double-crested cormorant population. Double-crested cormorants are migratory birds known for excessively preying upon fish populations in the Great Lakes.

Stupak first proposed this legislation in 2002.

The "Great Lakes Migratory Bird Research and Management Act," or H.R. 469, would enable the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to investigate the effects of migratory birds, such as cormorants, on fish stocks in the Great Lakes.

"Environmentalists, fishermen and outdoor enthusiasts all know that the double-crested cormorant has caused severe damage to fish populations," Stupak said.



Daily Press file photo
A young cormorant nests on an island off the shore of Delta County.

"This legislation will empower the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to assess the full extent of the problem and

develop management plans to control cormorants throughout Michigan and the Great Lakes region."

Double-crested cormorants are known for depleting perch, smallmouth bass and other freshwater fish populations.

For instance, in the summer of 2003, when the Les Cheneaux Islands experienced the height of their cormorant problem, it is estimated that 22,000 cormorants consumed six to 10 million fish near the islands. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Wildlife Services efforts to address the cormorant problem in Les Cheneaux Islands dramatically curtailed the cormorant problem on Les Cheneaux Islands. Last summer there were 3,500 fewer cormorant nests than in 2003.

Stupak said his legislation is aimed at moving cormorant control

beyond a piecemeal approach to a more integrated and comprehensive solution. The legislation would authorize the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, an international body, to develop a coordinated approach between Canada and affected Great Lakes states, including Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan. Under the bill, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission would develop a common "Memorandum of Understanding" outlining appropriate cormorant control measures.

"It does no good for one state or our government to adopt an aggressive cormorant control policy, if doing so simply motivates the birds to move across the lake," Stupak said. "By adopting comprehensive and collaborative solution, we will more effectively protect Great Lakes fish populations from

Outdoor wishes for 2007



Daily Press file photo
The cormorant has plagued the Lake Michigan shoreline, causing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to implement several control measures, including oiling eggs and shooting flocks.

Let's deal with cormorants, aquatic nuisance species

CORMORANT DEVASTATION

AT

LIGHTHOUSES

LOCAL

www.petoskeynews.com A3

AND AROUND THE STATE

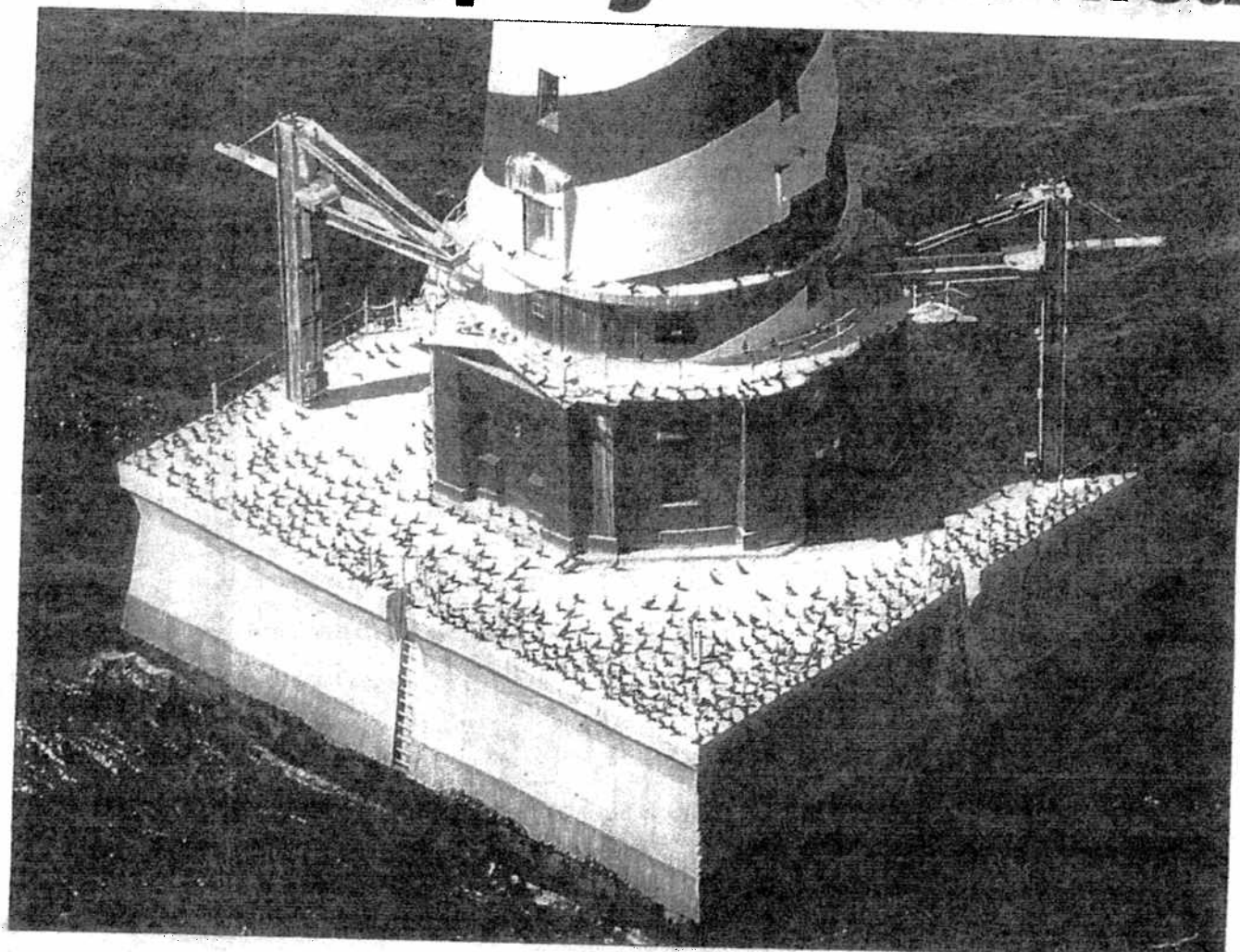
Orant control program unveiled

ation;
ly

ple of Les
ited years
le-crested
l and sen-
air perch
over the

were not
t joint ef-
encies to
nate the
ced.

men
epre-
ne Clark
enter to
nce pro-
ts.
n was led
irector of
culture's
l Fielder,
Natural



COURTESY PHOTO/JOHN WAGNER

More than 1,000 cormorants infest the White Shoal Lighthouse located about 20 miles west of the Mackinac Bridge. Dick Moehl, president of Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association, said the cormorants present historic preservation and health issues when

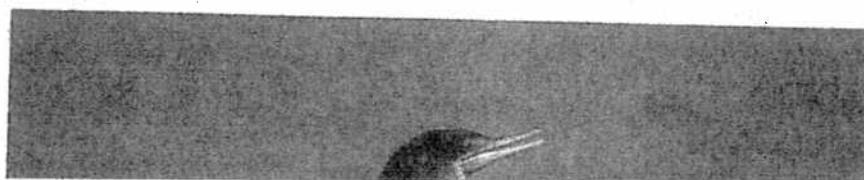
they invade and take possession of the lighthouses. The photographer, John Wagner, has published a book of his aerial photographs of Michigan's lighthouses titled, "Michigan Lighthouses: An Aerial Photographic Perspective."

o the de-
ibly pre-

of the lat-
l it takes
a single
reas like
est inci-
no

Out of control

DICK MOEHL, president of Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association, ap-



percent in recent years.

"For the last year and a half, there's been nothing but doom and gloom about this river," said Rick Hayes, an organizer of the Freeland Walleye Festival. "This is one of the best success stories the Michigan fisheries have had.

Grand Rapids police monitored anti-war protests, chief says

GRAND RAPIDS — When opposition to the war in Iraq began to mount last year, city police sent undercover officers to anti-war meetings and rallies, collecting intelligence about the aims of activists, the department's chief confirmed.

Grand Rapids Police Chief Harry Dolan said the officers were sent after police received information activists planned unlawful measures, such as blocking traffic on a downtown Grand Rapids street.

Prosecution of Detroit mafia draws to a close with case against boss

DETROIT — The federal government's prosecution of the area's mafia, which began with FBI recordings of meetings in the late 1970s, has drawn to a close along with the case against a mob boss.

Jack W. Tocco, the convicted leader of Detroit's La Cosa Nostra, paid \$950,000 this month to settle up financially with the government. And federal prosecutors decided not to press for more prison time, The Detroit News reported Monday.

"It has been a long ordeal for everyone involved, and we are all pleased that it is apparently over," said Jim Bellanca Jr., an attorney for the convicted Grosse Pointe Park mobster.

Compiled by Neil Stihwell from AP reports.

Lottery numbers

DETROIT (AP) — Here are the winning numbers selected **SUNDAY** in the Michigan State Lottery: Midday Daily 3, 4-3-4; Midday Daily 4, 8-0-1-1; Daily 3, 6-9-2; Daily 4, 7-2-3-0; Roll Down, 2-10-28-29-30; Keno, 3, 4, 12, 14, 25, 38, 39, 44, 47, 48, 53, 55, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70. **SATURDAY:** Midday Daily 3, 8-3-8; Midday Daily 4, 4-1-7-6; Daily 3, 2-9-8; Daily 4, 9-8-5-5; Roll Down, 1-3-15-24-29; WinFall, 5-12-15-16-34-37; Keno, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 15, 19, 26, 30, 38, 41, 46, 48, 50, 55, 58, 61, 65, 68, 70, 74, 77. **FRIDAY:** Midday Daily 3, 1-1-6; Midday Daily 4, 0-7-0-4; Daily 3, 7-5-0; Daily 4, 9-6-1-4; Roll Down, 10-16-19-25-26-27-28-29-30-31.

Keno 3 11 12 13 18 20 24 22 25

ters, rolling like a combine as they eagerly feast on the perch, then swarm back over each other and make a second run to take what they missed the first time.

An adult cormorant eats an average of one and a quarter pounds of fish a day, and a fledgling takes just 4 to 6 weeks after hatching before it consumes as much as an adult.

Experts say that during the spring and summer nesting season, there are more than 100,000 cormorants in the area from west of the Mackinac Bridge to Drummond Island in the east, with thousands more on Northern Michigan lakes.

Larry Meier of Houghton Lake, a private citizen and acknowledged expert who has led the charge against the cormorant, said Fielder's conclusion represented the first time the scientific community had confirmed the role of the cormorant in the devastation of the fisheries of the region.

Butchko, backed by a \$125,000 grant from Congress for cormorant management and another \$75,000 from government sources for monitoring equipment, outlined his plan to reduce the cormorant population in the area from 15,000 to 2,000 birds within six to 10 years, assuming Congress continues to fund the effort.

Butchko said he will direct an effort this summer to kill 15 percent or more of the adult birds, and, with the assistance of volunteers working under his authority, to spray the porous eggs of the nesting birds with corn oil, a control method used elsewhere with a 90 percent success rate.

The goal will be to reduce the birds' rate of reproduction from 100 percent to 10 percent.

Wal-Mart part of Charlevoix agenda

CHARLEVOIX — It will be a day of discussion in Charlevoix as a triple header schedule of meetings will cover everything from Wal-Mart to who might occupy the old post office building.

Meetings will begin at 5:30 p.m. today at the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Acacia conference/training room, 109 Bridge Park Dr.

First up is a special meeting of the Charlevoix City Council. The council plans to discuss proceeding with a photogrammetric mapping project this spring. Ayres Associates, which would handle the program, would place necessary targets and do related field work as soon as possible.

The city's contract, if signed

the lighthouses. It becomes not only a problem with their messing with historic preservation, but there's a health issue as well," he said.

"So there's more than just a fisheries issue here; there's a very, very large issue when it comes down to historic preservation of offshore lighthouses where these birds have invaded and taken possession of them. It's another dimension to this problem."

Asked how he intended to kill the adult birds, Butchko said only he would take measures established by the federal guidelines.

"We will be making up much of the program as we go along. Our goal is to reduce the cormorant foraging in the Les Cheneaux area as a means of improving the yellow perch fishery," he said. "This is the ground zero of the cormorant."

He ruled out setting bounties on the bird as unworkable and firmly discouraged illegal taking.

Butchko described the effort as a pilot program, the first of its kind in North America to control the cormorant in an environment like Les Cheneaux and one he wants to present as a model for other states which don't have funding for similar programs.

"I'd rather have a small success we can learn from than a wide-spread flop," he said. "The whole rest of North America would like to be in your shoes tonight. You're lucky to have Congressional help."

Butchko's plan follows a "public resources depredation order" of the USDA's Wildlife Service last fall that allows local, state and federal agencies flexibility in the control of double-crested cormorants to protect public resources such as fisheries.

The d

"We neers, Amer closely includ our sh what v He s gram's fly sou Butc

Stabel Bart S Camp, tur, D- \$125,00 tions b But, the pe lands' determ "The l for this

Aske areas which said he "We' the ma "We'll throug try."

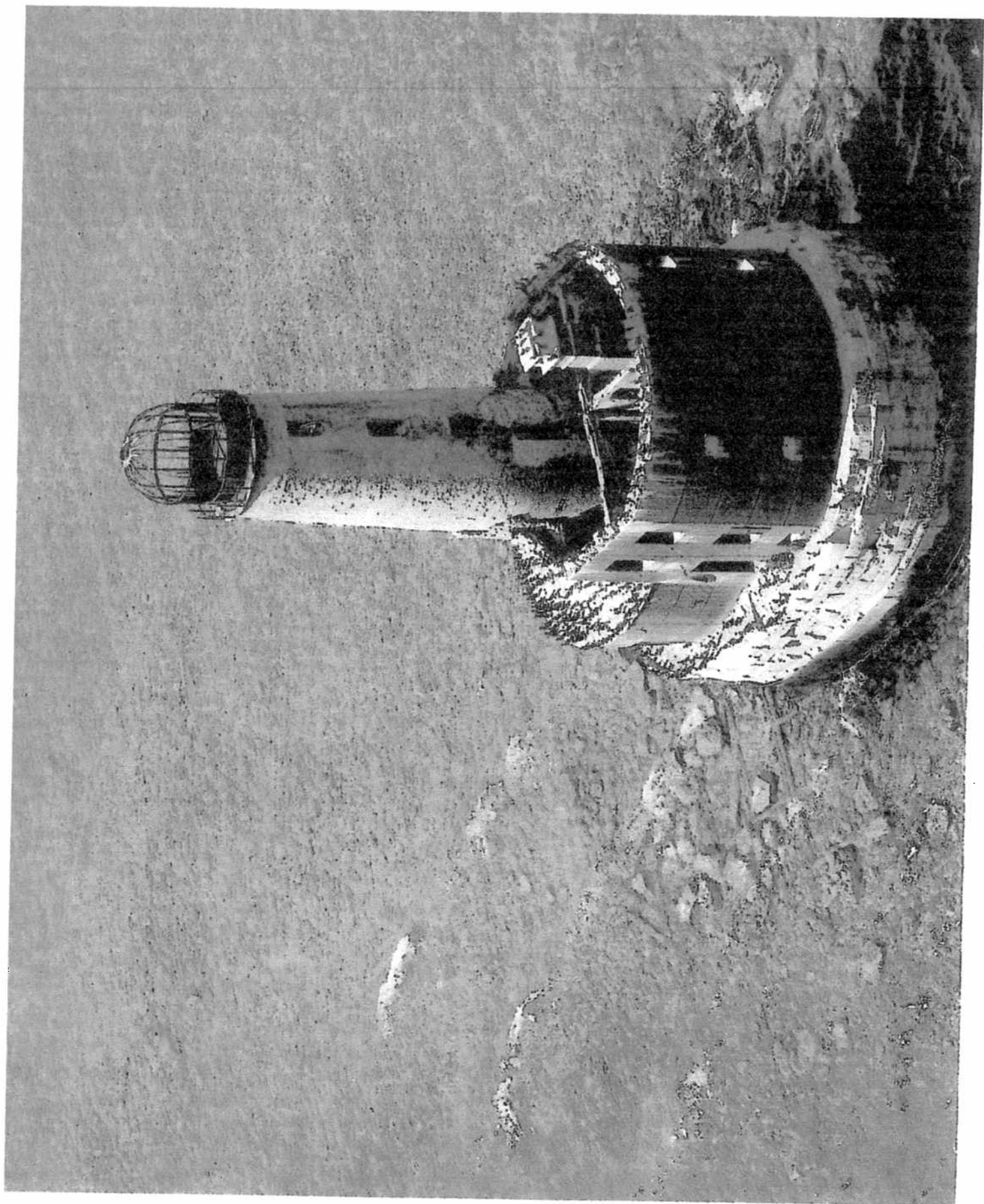
He sa state in imals a

Mid

LAN: lawma would in Mic nance enough tem.

Rep. poses a print a undisc of a ger a prima

"For shielded paig r how it who sa the legi

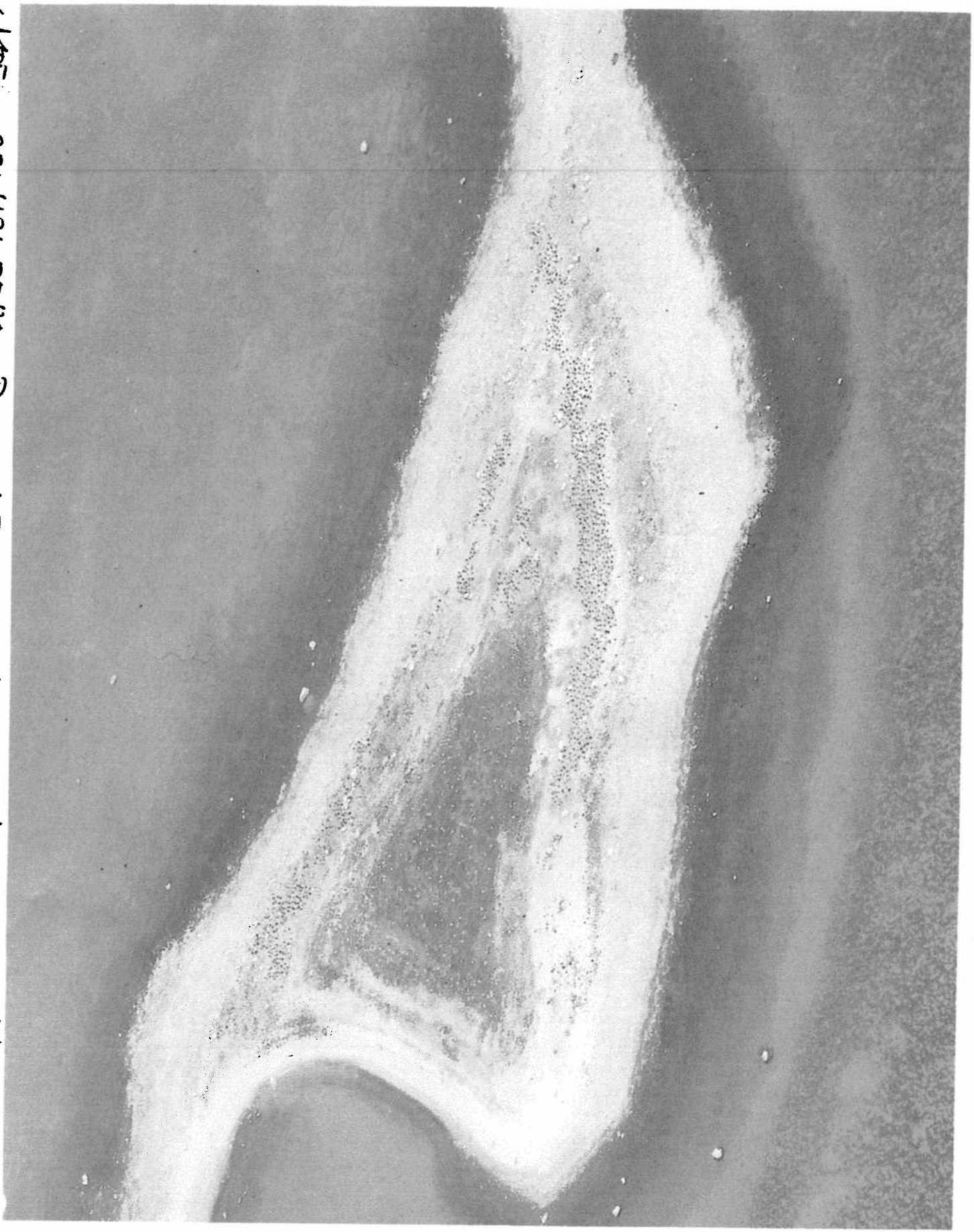


AGOSHANCE LIGHT STATION (A.K.A. M.C.L. 111) 1942



Cord Seon Reef Light Lake Michigan 1900 was on Altona, Mich. 1900

Dick Hobe 231 436 5580 BEAVER ISLAND HTU JOHN WAGNER PHOTO



Preliminary data suggest cormorant control works

By JOE BOOMGAARD
Ludington Daily News Staff Writer
Posted 1/8/2006

Pete Butchko is a cormorant's worst enemy.

The director of USDA wildlife services in Michigan manages cormorant control measures in the state, measures which include both harassment and killing of the birds. Many anglers and biologists in the state suspect cormorants are negatively affecting fish populations throughout the Great Lakes basin.

Butchko, speaking as part of the Sea Grant Michigan Fishery Workshop Saturday, outlined the history of the double-breasted cormorant population and the progress his agency has made in controlling the bird, which he said have "expanded 1,000-fold since the 1970s."

A project for cormorant control measures at the Ludington Pumped Storage Plant is in the works between the Michigan DNR and the USDA, but relies on funding, Butchko said.

The DNR's Lake Michigan Management Unit Fisheries Supervisor Tom Rozich said he was "sure the (Lake Michigan) basin team will move forward" with cormorant control in Ludington this year. Rozich and Butchko's staffers inventoried the nesting site last summer.

"More people want control than we can provide. ... Ludington may be one of those places," Butchko said.

The USDA, with the help of local partners, has several projects throughout the state that aim to keep the cormorant population in check in places where it is believed that the sport fisheries have suffered because of heavy predation by cormorants.

The measures, he said, take a combined lethal and harassing approach. One project in the Les Cheneaux Islands in northern Lake Huron has combined oiling the eggs of ground-nesting cormorants with limited shooting. At the site in 2006, Butchko said he's seen a 56 percent reduction in the nesting population of cormorants since 2002.

In that time, evidence has shown some positive fisheries changes, although some of the predictions might be premature, he said.

"We don't want to declare victory too soon," Butchko said.

The Michigan legislature promised \$150,000 to help cormorant control efforts statewide if the federal government matches the funds.

In all, 5,400 of the more than 67,000 cormorants were killed last year, according to Butchko's data. That program and the non-lethal programs were made possible by \$200,000 in federal funding, he said.